

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Rulemaking on the Commission's Own	)	
Motion into Universal Service and to	)	R.95-01-020
Comply with the Mandates of Assembly	)	(Filed January 24, 1995)
Bill 3643.	)	
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Investigation on the Commission's Own	)	
Motion into Universal Service and to	)	I.95-01-021
Comply with the Mandates of Assembly	)	(Filed January 24, 1995)
Bill 3643.	)	
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**ASSIGNED COMMISSIONER'S RULING**

The California Teleconnect Fund was established in Decision (D.) 96-10-066. In D.97-01-020, the Commission noted that:

"D.96-10-066 left open the question of who will verify the documentation of the entities applying for discounts under the California Teleconnect Fund. At the outset of this program, there will be some labor intensive efforts needed to verify that the entities applying for the discounts are qualified to take advantage of the program. We believe that such an effort should be undertaken by the Commission's Telecommunications Division initially. The staff is in a position to determine the type of reporting or documentation needed to qualify for the discounts. Since this is a startup program, the staff can analyze and recommend how the process for qualifying for discounts under the California Teleconnect Fund can be improved. Eventually, these responsibilities should be taken over by the persons hired by the trust that is set up to administer the California Teleconnect Fund."

In accordance with ordering paragraph 11 of D.96-10-066, and in order to ensure that a process is in place to certify and verify that the entities applying for the California Teleconnect Fund discounts are eligible, the Telecommunications Division staff, in conjunction with the workshop participants, developed a self certification application form at the January 24, 1996, workshop on reporting requirements for carriers that provide discounts under the California Teleconnect Fund.

Under the procedures discussed at the workshop, the certification application form would be filled out by the customer, and the appropriate documentation attached. The form would be certified to, and signed by the customer. The carrier would then be responsible for screening the

customer supplied information for compliance with the California Teleconnect Fund criteria, as contained in D.96-10-066. The carrier could also require additional information in order to process the customer's request for discounted services. This could include a list of existing services that the customer seeks to convert to discounted services.

If the criteria are not met, no discounted services would be provided. If the customer qualifies for the Teleconnect Fund program, based on the information supplied by the customer, the carrier would then fill out the carrier portion of the form listing the total monthly discounts the customer is eligible for, and enroll the customer in the discount program. The carrier would then forward the entire application form, along with the customer's attachments to the Telecommunications Division staff, who would then review the application for completeness and compliance with the Teleconnect Fund criteria set forth in D.96-10-066, including the projected availability of monies to fund the discounts. If the application is in order, the staff would then assign an identification number to each Teleconnect Fund customer, and inform the carrier about the customer's identification number. The completed application form and attachments would be retained by the Commission in the event any eligibility issues arise.

The workshop also suggested that all subsequent service change orders be handled directly by the carrier, and that no additional customer application forms would have to be forwarded to the Commission. The effect of any service change orders would be reported by the carriers in their monthly reports to the Commission.

In order to timely implement the California Teleconnect Fund, certain internal processing procedures need to be established. The procedures outlined by the staff are workable solutions for getting customers signed up for the discounts, and allowing the carrier and the Commission to track the amount and kinds of discounts. However, because the amount of the available funds in the California Teleconnect Fund are limited, I believe that certain safeguards should be put in place to ensure that the Teleconnect Fund program is being administered in a fair manner. The process detailed below shall serve as the interim procedure for processing the Teleconnect Fund applications.

1. All carriers shall use the attached instructions and application form entitled "California Teleconnect Fund, Service Discounts Certification Application (Interim)" (Appendix A.) to sign up qualifying entities for the California Teleconnect Fund program.

2. Because the amount of the available funds in the California Teleconnect Fund are limited, availability of these funds for discounts shall be provided on a first come, first serve basis in accordance with these processing procedures.

3. All customers eligible to participate in the California Teleconnect Fund program shall complete all the required information in the Service Discounts Certification Application (Interim), provide the necessary attachments, if any, and return the completed application to the carrier for further processing.

4. The carrier shall screen the customer supplied information for compliance with the California Teleconnect Fund criteria contained in D.96-10-066.

5. If the customer appears eligible based upon the carrier's screening, the carrier shall complete the "for carrier use only" portion of the form, and shall mail or hand deliver the completed application form and attachments to the CPUC, Telecommunications Division, Attention: California Teleconnect Fund, 505 Van Ness Avenue, #3-E1, San Francisco, CA 94102.

6. No carrier is authorized to provide discounted services to a customer under the California Teleconnect Fund program until that customer's application has been reviewed and the availability of funds determined by the Telecommunications Division staff.

7. Upon delivery of the completed application form and attachments to the Telecommunications Division staff responsible for the California Teleconnect Fund, the form shall be date and time stamped, and assigned a sequential processing number in the order received.

8. The staff responsible for the California Teleconnect Fund shall review each application in the order received for compliance with the California Teleconnect Fund criteria and the amount of available funds. If the application is incomplete, or the applicant does not meet the California Teleconnect Fund criteria, the application shall be immediately rejected, and the carrier notified. If the application is complete, meets the California Teleconnect Fund criteria, and funds are available, the staff shall so advise the carrier, and cause a confirmation letter to be mailed to the carrier and the customer. Due to the large number of expected applications, inquiries from carriers and/or customers regarding the status of a customer's Teleconnect Fund application will not be entertained. If more than three weeks have passed from the time the carrier submitted the application to the staff, the carrier may request in writing that the staff check on the status of the application.

9. The confirmation letter shall state that the completed application form has been reviewed, that funds are available, and that the discount shall be applicable as of the date the application was date stamped by the Telecommunications Division staff.

10. Any additional discounted services ordered by a previously approved Teleconnect Fund customer will require the completion of a new application form. If the category of customer requires additional attachments, and those attachments have previously been submitted to the Commission, there is no need to submit those attachments again so long as a reference is made in the application to the effective date of the previously approved application.

11. The completed application forms and attachments shall be retained by the Commission for the life of the California Teleconnect Fund program. The information contained on the completed application forms and attachments will permit the staff to monitor the program and the size of the fund, aid in the preparation of reports, and assist in verifying any claims of ineligibility.

After the workshop report is completed, as contemplated in ordering paragraph 16.b. of D.96-10-066 as modified by D.97-01-020, a ruling or decision will issue regarding whether the interim form and processing procedures should be used on a permanent basis.

Due to the nature of the information contained in a completed application form, and in any supporting attachments, I believe that this information should be retained as non-public information by the Commission. Parties who are interested in commenting on this issue before a permanent processing procedure is adopted, are invited to do so.

Therefore, **IT IS RULED** that:

1. In accordance with ordering paragraph 11 of D.96-10-066, and conclusion of law 13 in D.97-01-020, the instructions and form attached hereto as Appendix A shall be used on an interim basis by all carriers enrolling qualifying customers in the California Teleconnect Fund program, and the interim processing procedures as described above shall be used to enroll customers in the California Teleconnect Fund program.

2. Parties interested in commenting on whether the customer and carrier specific information contained in the California Teleconnect Fund application form and attachments should be open for public inspection under General Order 66-C, shall file those comments with the Commission's Docket Office on or before February 28, 1997.

Dated February 5, 1997, at San Francisco, California.

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Jessie J. Knight, Jr.  
Assigned Commissioner

## **APPENDIX A**

### **California Teleconnect Fund - Service Discounts Certification Application**

#### **Instructions for Applicants:**

**Applicants shall fill out a separate form for each carrier from whom they seek discounted services, attach all required information, and return the completed application to the carrier for further processing. If applicants are applying for discounted services under more than one entity type, a separate application form is to be used for each entity type. Your telecommunications service provider may require additional information as well to process your request for discounted services. Service under the discounted rates are not available until your certification application has been reviewed by the staff of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) in the order received, and subject to the availability of program funds. Subsequent orders for additional discounted services require completion of a new application form.**

**Applicants are responsible for notifying the CPUC of any change in any statements attested to in the application within 30 days from the date of the change. This notification shall be accomplished by filling out a new certification application, along with any required attachments, and a brief explanation of the change. That information shall be mailed or hand delivered to the CPUC, Telecommunications Division - Attention: California Teleconnect Fund, 505 Van Ness Avenue, #3-E1, San Francisco, CA 94102. Upon receipt of this information, the staff will evaluate whether the customer still qualifies for the California Teleconnect Fund discounts.**

#### **Instructions for Carriers:**

**Carriers are to perform a review of the information contained in the application. Carriers shall reject the application if any of the criteria for the California Teleconnect Fund program, as set forth in Decision 96-10-066, is not met based on the customer supplied information. If the customer appears eligible, the carrier shall complete their portion of the application, retain a copy of the application for their own records, and forward the original application along with all attachment(s) to the CPUC's Telecommunications Division, at the same address as indicated above, for further processing.**

**CALIFORNIA TELECONNECT FUND**  
**Service Discounts Certification Application (Interim 2/5/97)**

Name of Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one of the following boxes to identify your entity type (a separate form is to be used if you are applying for service discounts under more than one entity type):

- \_\_\_\_\_ K-12, Public School / Public School District      Please enter your CDE Code #: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ K-12, Non-Profit Private School\*      Please enter your CDE Code #: \_\_\_\_\_  
(\*Please attach a copy of tax exempt statement from the Internal Revenue Service.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Library eligible for funds in the state-based plans under Title III of the Library Services and Construction Act, now the Library Services and Technology Act.  
(Please attach a copy of certification from the California State Library.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Municipal or county government owned and operated hospital or health clinic.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Community based organization, tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) or 501(d) of the Internal Revenue Code and offering health care, job training, job placement, and/or educational instruction services.  
(Please attach a copy of your latest IRS Form 990.)

Please answer yes or no to the following questions as appropriate:

- \_\_\_\_\_ If you are applying as a school, do you have a total endowment that exceeds \$50 million?
- \_\_\_\_\_ If you are applying as a community based organization, are you currently subscribing to discounted services from another telephone company?  
\_\_\_\_\_ If yes, would your total subscription of discounted services from all telephone companies exceed the number of discounted lines allowed by the California Public Utilities Commission?

Applicant is responsible for notifying the California Public Utilities Commission within 30 days of any change in any of the above statements.

I, (please print *name and title*) \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that I am authorized to act on behalf of the above-named institution, that the above statements are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that the subscribed discounted telecommunications services will not be sold, resold, transferred or shared with any other non-qualifying entity or person.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ FAX (Optional): (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

**For Carrier Use Only:**

Name of Carrier: \_\_\_\_\_ Carrier's CPUC ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone : (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ Total Monthly Discounts: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Carrier Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ PRINTED NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

**For CPUC Use Only:** Certification Application Complete: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Funds Available: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**End of Appendix A**



**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I certify that I have by mail this day served a true copy of the original attached Assigned Commissioner's Ruling on all parties of record in this proceeding or their attorneys of record.

Dated February 5, 1997, at San Francisco, California.

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Gabrielle Nguyen

**N O T I C E**

Parties should notify the Process Office, Public Utilities Commission, 505 Van Ness Avenue, Room 2000, San Francisco, CA 94102, of any change of address to insure that they continue to receive documents. You must indicate the proceeding number on the service list on which your name appears.

JXK/gab 2/4/97